

## **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

During the fall of 2001, the Wildland Urban Interface Task Force Subcommittee of the Local Emergency Planning Committee of Kootenai County received several grants to develop a wildland urban interface fire mitigation plan. Subsequently, a consultant team was hired to assist in the development of this plan and met with the committee in December to establish the scope of the plan and the schedule for conducting the plan.

At this meeting, the committee accepted the consultant's recommendation that the committee be expanded to include citizens. At various times during the planning process there were over 40 participants not all of whom attended all meetings, but who received information developed through the process. Also, the committee established January 8, 2002 as the first meeting of the larger committee.

The citizen participation program for the plan was based on the following goals developed by the Wildland Urban Interface Planning Committee at their January 8th Committee Meeting. These goals were:

***INSPIRE THE PUBLIC TO ACTION.***

***BROAD BASED, EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION - CRITICAL TO INVOLVE AS MANY FOLKS AS POSSIBLE.***

***UNDERSTAND COMMUNITY BASED, SPECIFIC CONCERNS.***

***RAISE AWARENESS.***

The committee selected a set of participatory methods for the program from a combination of those recommended by the consultant team plus additions made by the committee.

### ***Information/Comment Handout***

A one page information/comment handout with wildland urban interface fire information on the front and a space for comments on the back was prepared to develop interest in fire mitigation planning and collect information from citizens on their perceptions of risks and hazards. This handout was distributed by Committee members, provided to all the Kootenai County Fire Districts, and available at the March Home and Garden Show and the Silver Lake Mall Priorities Display.

### ***Workshop Series***

First, Problem Identification Workshops were held in February on Tuesday, February 5 at the Coeur d'Alene Casino; Wednesday, February 6 in the Commons at Lakeland High School, Tuesday, February 12, Eastside Fire Station, and Wednesday, February 13

Northern Lakes Fire Station, Hayden. At the workshops citizens were asked to identify problems and strategies related to wildland urban interface fire hazards, risks and issues. Information provided by citizens was used to help the Committee develop a set of preliminary actions.

A second set of workshops was conducted to ask the public to review draft goals and the preliminary action steps generated by the Committee at their February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. The workshops were held on Tuesday, March 12 at the Coeur d'Alene Casino, Wednesday, March 13 in the Commons at Lakeland High School, Tuesday, March 19 at East Side Fire Station and Wednesday, March 20 at the Northern Lakes Fire Station, Hayden. People had a chance to look over preliminary actions, suggest new ideas and select their top five priorities.

### ***Interactive Displays***

The Committee decided another effective way to reach many people would be to sponsor a booth at the Kootenai County Home and Garden Show, March 15, 16, and 17th and a display at the Silver Lake Mall on April 6th. A very short informal questionnaire called Welcome to Fire County was developed to offer citizens a way to select their individual priorities for action steps for the plan at Home and Garden Show. Over 300 people stopped by the Home and Garden Show. After tabulating the results from this activity, a smaller subset of activities were chosen for display boards at the Silver Lake Mall. . People voted for the activities by attaching dots to the activities in the display. Nearly 100 citizens participated in this activity. Both displays were staffed by Committee members and the planning consultant team. These events also offered the opportunity for Committee members to listen informally to individual citizens.

### ***Public Review***

One final public meeting was held on the evening of June 7 at the U. S. Forest Service building in northwest Coeur d'Alene. There were no participants at this meeting; therefore, the Committee made their final recommendations to the consultants.

Complete detailed results of the participation program can be found in Appendix A.

### ***Fire Department and State and Federal Agency Interviews***

During the data collection process the fire chiefs of each of the individual fire districts were interviewed as well as personnel from state and federal agencies. They were asked to identify specific problems they face in the wildland urban interface and suggest some solutions to these problems. In addition, they located the sites of specific fire hazards and summarized the capabilities and apparatus of their department or agency.

### ***Technical Data Collection***

Additional technical information was collected concurrent with the participatory activities. Secondary information on fire history, climate, fuel loading and fire risk was included in this research. Summaries of this data are contained in a subsequent section of this report and in the appendices and maps available on disk at the Kootenai County Disaster Services.

**Figure 1 Citizens Describe Fire Problems at East Side Fire Station**



**Figure 2 Fire Mitigation Committee Reviews Action Statements**



**Figure 3 Citizens View Fire Display at Home and Garden Show**



**Figure 4 Citizens Choose Action Statements at Home and Garden Show**

